

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, September 18. 1708.

STILL, Gentlemen, if you have any Event of the great Affairs in *Flanders* known, if *Lille* is taken, or a Battle fought, or a Victory obtain'd, or the Enemy di'appointed, or the Siege rais'd, and our Troops defeated; or what ever it is, you are to observe before hand, That the Author of this being at some distance from you at this time, the News had not reach'd into the Country when this was wrote, and therefore you are to allow him as in his last, to talk in the Language of the Time, while the People in suspense about the mighty Event, were anxious and full of concern, which way the Wheel of Providence shall be pleas'd to turn this Great Affair — Whether to CONQUEST, which if it shall be the Consequence, we have Reason

to hope may happily end the War; or to DISAPPOINTMENT, which if it follows, we must perhaps have some of our Work to do over again, and must expect the Sword to be yet stretch'd out for some longer time over *Europe*—A Thing, which they that do not take for a Judgment, may be said to understand very little of the manner of GOD's governing the World.

You may remember, I have often sent you to the *French* for Instruction, for Spectacles, and for Examples; and I am perswaded, these *French Folks* might teach us abundance of Things, if we were not too haughty to learn from our Enemies—I shall not trouble you with long Digressions, of what every Nation might learn of them; in short, they would teach the *Italians* Courage,

rage, the *Spaniards* Speed, the *Swiss* Policy, the *Germans* Unanimity; and the *English* Devotion.

That's hard you'll say, and perhaps I may have another *Grub-Street* Railery upon me for affronting the Government; my design is not to affront any body, but perfectly unconcern'd at any bodies being affronted, or if you are all affronted, while I am positive of this, that I have both Truth and Reason on my side, and a just necessity of speaking it: — And therefore be the *French* as *Popish* as you please, let their Devotion be as odious to you as you will, and talk of their praying to GOD with as much Contempt as you please — The Case is the same — I am not going to dispute about the Vertue of your Prayers, or theirs; But I can't help observing this to you, that as soon as ever the Orders are sent from the *French* Court to their Armies to joyn, and at all hazards to attempt the relief of *Lisle* — At the same time, Orders are sent to the Archbishop of *Paris*, to cause Publick Prayers to be made to GOD over his whole Diocess for the Success of their Armies, and for putting an End to this terrible War, and particularly for the mighty Action they expect every Day to hear of?

Now, Gentlemen, will you go to School to the *French*; have you nothing depending? Is all sure? Is all the Game in your own hands? Is there no possibility of Mischance, and have you nothing to say all this while — Not one Petition to Heaven to be of your Side — What shall be expected of such a Generation? Has my *Madman* nothing to say to them?

Mad-Man. When you want to quarrel with Folk, you always call for your *Madman*; what do you expect I should say of them? — I shall not please you, I am not devout enough for you. —

Review. I cannot think you can be so Mad, but you must agree with me in this, that the *French* have set us an Example we ought to imitate, in their applying to Heaven in such an extraordinary Conjunction as this.

M. I own the *French* are to be commen-

ded in it and in like extremities, but it may be, I may not be so forward as you for condemning our People for not doing the like.

R. Why not, pray what Reason can you give for it?

M. Would you have my mad-Reasons for it? Would you have me speak like a *Madman* to the Case?

Rev. I always expect you should speak like your self, and the maddest Man in *Bedlam* cannot oppose this I am sure.

M. Do not be too sure of things, you must take things as they are; the *French* are in Distress, beaten, and run down; we are Besieging *Peit-Paris*, and *Paris-Grand* torters, and 'tis time for them to fall to Prayers — Like the Men of *Tarshish*, they all prayed, and prayed to all their variety of Gods, but it was when the Ship was covered with Waves: But our Case is quite otherwise, we are sure of Victory, the Town is our own, and all is well, what should we go to our Prayers for?

Rev. Right madly express'd indeed, and prophanely enough.

M. Did you never hear a Story of two Cabin-Boys, discoursing very gravely of their respective Masters, and what they did at Sea, and how their Commanders lived — *JACK*, says one, what for a Master have you got? — O, a sad Master, says *Jack*; he Swears, and Damns, and Curses, and kicks us all if the Wind don't blow as he'd have it. Well, but you had a great Storm last Voyage, what did he do then *Jack*? — O, says *JACK*, then he call'd us all down to Prayers — But what does your Master do *TOM*, says *JACK*; my Master, says *TOM*, I don't like him at all, I'd rather have such a jolly Fellow as yours is; my Master is always plaguing us with his Prayers, and is so Damnable Religious, he'll call us all down to Prayers, if it blows but a Cap full of Wind, and when there's NO MORE NEED of it, than there is to run one's Head against the Main-mast — Now you are like *Tom's* Master, you are for calling all the People to Prayers, because you are Besieging *Lisle*, when there's

no need of it——— No, no more need of it than there is *in a Ship at Sea*.

Rev. I suppose when you are talking thus, you would have the World know, not only that you are a *Lunatick*, but that the Moon is increasing, your *Lucid Interval* lately over, and you are talking like a true *Bedlamite*; or that if you are sober, you talk by Irony, and expect to be understood so.

M. I believe I talk so, as any Body may understand me; if you cannot, that is no fault of mine: WHAT would you have the People pray FOR?

Rev. Is that a Question to be ask'd? Are not we told, the two Armies are in fight of one another? Are we not told the *French* are 115000 Men, and resolv'd to relieve the Town whatever it cost? Are we not told they are pushing at the Duke of *Marlborough* to bring him to a Battle? And that they are stronger than him by 35000 Men? Is not the odds dangerous, and are we not justly under great Concern about these things? I think it is time to pray to GOD to help us.

M. Not at all.

Rev. Why so?

M. It's all Hyppo, there's nothing in it; if you were 50000 Men, and the *French* 150000, they dare not fight you; and if they do fight we are sure of beating them.

Rev. That may be true indeed, *a-la-Mode d'Almanza*: But why must we not pray? You are not come to that yet.

M. What need you pray, you are as sure to take *Lisle*, and as sure to beat the *French* if they attempt you, as you are sure they will have more Wit than to venture.

Rev. Sure of VICTORY say you! that is a bold Word; a-very pretty thing indeed; so you are for telling the People, they are able to beat the *French* without GOD Almighty's help: And need not trouble him with the impertinence of their Prayers, nor be beholden to him for His Assistance; is not this your Language?

M. If I had said so in so many Words, I had said nothing but what I can give you Authors for.

Rev. What sort of Authors must they be?

M. Why truly almost all the Authors that write upon the Head, all the People that give an Account of it tell us so; for at the same time, they tell us the *French* are so much Superiour to us. They say, they cannot relieve *Lisle* without fighting our Army, and that it is believ'd they will not be so hardy as to attempt That; for our Troops are so much better than the *French*, that we fear no odds, that the Duke of *Marlborough* is ready for them, and resolves to fight them, let the odds be what it will— And thus they run on, there is not one Word of GOD Almighty in all the Accounts, nor the least appearance of Concern, whether he be on one side or another; therefore 'tis not your *Madman* only that is of this Opinion, 'tis the Language of the Age.

Rev. A sad Omen indeed! on the contrary! the *French* are on their knees praying for Deliverance and for Success against us: Unpraying Protestants! Don't tell me they pray to False Gods, till we can see you praying to the True; That they pray to *Saints* and the *Virgin Mary*, and innumerable Intercessors that cannot hear them, some of them may chance to be sincerely praying to the True GOD, and if you wholly neglect it, you may expect what you will, but if GOD should deliver you, that seek it not, and deliver up them that are crying for Mercy; He would Act in a way you have no warrant to hope for, and differing from the common course of his Providence in the World.

M. We are resolv'd to venture it.

Rev. WE, who do you mean by WE?

M. Nay you may Judge who I mean; WE *Madmen*, WE, that GOD in various Methods of Judgment has depriv'd of our Sences, our Memories, and the Power of Reflecting, for I readily acknowledge, no body in their Sences would talk so.

Rev. Where do these People live, I hope they are all in *Bedlam* with you?

M. Indeed no, they are scatter'd up and down over the whole Face of this our *British* World, and they are mixt among all Peo.